United Nations S/2000/321

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 April 2000
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 14 April 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement dated 14 April 2000 by the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in connection with the Security Council's consideration of the report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Hans Blix (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) S. **Lavrov**

00-39478 (E) 180400 180400

Annex to the letter dated 14 April 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Text of the statement dated 14 April 2000 by the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

On 13 April 2000, the Security Council considered the report by the head of the new Commission for disarmament monitoring in Iraq (UNMOVIC), Hans Blix, on the structure of and the principles for staffing the working body being set up (S/2000/292). At first glance, this involves a "technical" step within the framework of implementing Security Council resolution 1284 (1999) on Iraq. Nevertheless, questions of principle connected with the resumption of Iraq's cooperation with the United Nations again arise.

As is well known, the Russian Federation, together with a number of other members of the Security Council, was unable to support resolution 1284 (1999) owing to the lack of clarity and ambiguity of its wording. Unfortunately, the report of Mr. Blix is not without such flaws either. One of its main defects is the lack of a significant political component which would ensure a balance in the activities of the new verification mechanisms and make it possible to avert potential clashes and disputes with Iraq.

The report does not clearly prescribe procedures for conducting inspections, taking samples or aerial monitoring and fails to mention anything about the need to reach agreement on these procedures with Baghdad. It was precisely in connection with these questions that many serious problems arose during the period in which the former United Nations Special Commission was operating in Iraq. Nor can we share the report's overstated assessment of the experience of the staff members of that body, which compromised itself. There must be no return to Butler's working methods.

The practical aspects of the new Commission's activities require substantial revision. It is the position of the Russian Federation that further measures to implement the report of Mr. Blix will be undertaken in consultations with the members of the Security Council, as was also reflected in the Council's reaction to this document. Our final assessment of the steps being taken to implement the disarmament section of resolution 1284 (1999) will depend on the specific form that the plans being proposed take.